

CAPITAL CITY COURIER

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TALK OF THE TOWN

That J. Sterling Morton, the new secretary of agriculture, is a pioneer has been stated so often in the public print that few realize how much of a pioneer he really is. He has lived in Nebraska now almost forty years. In 1854 Nebraska City consisted of one or two crude houses and an old blockhouse used for defense against Indians. Mr. Morton was one of the first settlers, and his newspaper, the Nebraska City News, which is still a factor in the upbuilding of that city, was the first paper issued in Nebraska. It was issued from that blockhouse. To use Mr. Morton's own words: "A few cases of type, a few quires of paper, a small quantity of ink and a Washington handpress constituted the entire concern. As the first cry of a new-born infant is to the voice of a full-grown man, as the acorn is to the oak, so was this printing office to the civilization, the population, the agricultural and commercial prosperity which it heralded and inaugurated."

That Mr. Morton was instinctively a home-builder has been attested not only by his long residence in Nebraska, but by the handsome home he has evolved from the wilderness, now known as Arbor Lodge. He built his first house in 1854. It was a very crude affair, constructed of logs, and a majority of his neighbors at that time were Indians. Years later he replaced the old log structure with a more modern house on the same site. This in turn gave way to a still prettier one, and finally the fourth house was designed and built under the direction of Mrs. Morton, who died June 29, 1881. It is said that she originated the idea of Arbor day, but gave the credit to her husband. It occurs on his birthday anniversary. She is remembered by hundreds of old Nebraskans as a most lovable woman, and her loss was a severe blow to her husband and her children.

As the founder of a family Mr. Morton, with the priceless aid of his wife, was as signally successful as in rearing a home. He has four exceptionally bright and successful sons—Paul, Joy, Mark and Carl. Paul began life as a clerk in the B. & M. offices at Plattsmouth and remained in the railroad service until he became, first, general passenger agent and then general freight agent of the great Burlington system. He is now first vice-president of the Whitebreast coal company, enjoys a salary of \$12,000 a year, is married and lives in Chicago. Joy Morton is the head of the great salt firm of Joy Morton & Co. in Chicago, and has large interests in the cereal mills and starch works at Nebraska City. He is

married and makes his home in Chicago. Mark Morton, who is also married, also lives in Chicago and is a member of the firm of Joy Morton & Co. Carl, the youngest son, lives at Nebraska City, where he is manager of the starch works. He is also married and has promise of a bright future before him. They are all most exemplary young men and are very much devoted to their father and the memory of their sainted mother.

The sensation of the week in legislative circles was the report filed on Wednesday by the joint committee appointed to investigate the character of punishment inflicted upon convicts in the state penitentiary, an investigation inspired by the suicide of Convict Powell while undergoing discipline during the early days of the present session. The report of the committee administers a black eye to prison authorities for years past. It finds that the punishment in vogue for years has been inhuman, barbarous and cruel in many cases, and finds especially that the system of punishing convicts by handcuffing their hands behind them, passing a rope around the neck, which rope is connected with the handcuffs and drawn tight in order to lift and support their hands, is one that should not be tolerated in this enlightened age or in a civilized community, and that such punishment is one which is likely at any time to be the indirect, if not the direct cause of the death of a convict undergoing it. The committee expressed its conviction that the death of Convict Powell was a direct result of the cruel and inhuman punishment inflicted upon him.

One peculiar finding of the committee is that, under the contract labor system now in vogue at the penitentiary, the convicts are not allowed sufficient time in which to bathe and that they are not permitted and required to bathe as often as they should be. The committee recommends that officials be directed to provide more frequent baths and that longer time be given them therefor. It also recommends better pay for guards that a better class of men may be secured, having found it a disgrace that men of little better moral nature than the convicts themselves are employed to watch over and take charge of prisoners. The committee further finds that instances of inexcusable barbarity on the part of guards, cell house keepers and other employes have been far too frequent, and recommends that brutality on the part of an attendant be cause for instant dismissal of the attendant. The committee finds the contract labor system demoralizing to discipline and believes it should be done away with. The committee recommends the adoption of the parole system, the separation of new convicts and hardened criminals, with a view of reforming

the newer ones and the establishment of a night school in the penitentiary. Altogether the committee has made some humane suggestions, and a trial of them need not injure the penitentiary if, indeed, it does not effect material good.

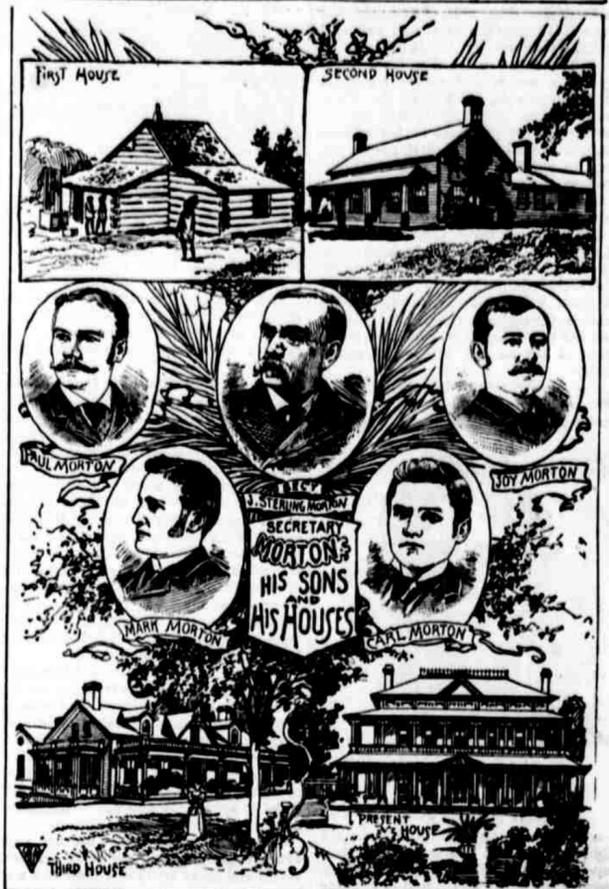
The efforts of creditors to get anything in the shape of evidence as to the condition of C. W. Mosher's finances, by an inquisition in Judge Tibbetts' court during the past week, have inspired a good many people with unqualified contempt of court. Among the witnesses wanted were C. W. Mosher, D. E. Thompson and W. H. Dorgan. Mosher declined to appear, and as he is now under legal duress of the federal court he was not brought in on a capias. Thompson appeared, but could throw very little light upon Mr. Mosher's possessions. W. H. Dorgan had forgotten everything he ever knew. He didn't remember how much he paid Mosher for the prison labor contract—not even whether it were near \$10,000 or \$100,000. They all played horse with the court.

What is a water commissioner? What are the duties of such an official in Lincoln? Why is it necessary for the water commissioner to come before the council and recommend that a defective connection between two water mains be remedied? Why is it not the duty of the commissioner to remedy the defect and save the wind he ex-

pects the mayor has the correct view of the legal situation, it will add to the interest in the coming election.

The water commissioner has sounded an alarm that is not entirely new. He says that as the demands made upon the South street water plant increase the suction is likely to overwork the supply, so that about the time the city gets so that it will need every gallon of water it can draw from its well, that well is likely to absorb salt water from the creek bottom and inaugurate another reign of terror by sending salt water through the city mains. This is but the repetition of a fear repeatedly expressed when the city went to the bottoms for its water supply, and it is to be hoped that it is not well grounded, but it might be the part of wisdom to guard against such a contingency as the flooding of our water system with salt water. There are hundreds of people in Lincoln who believe that the creek bottom is unsafe and unreliable and unhealthy as a water supply, and this agitation is destined to be frequently and earnestly revived until the city has other considerable sources available.

Another crank has come to the front. This time it is a young man who proposes to ride around the world on horseback. Of course it cannot be done, but that fact doesn't need to interfere with the designs of the crank, who seeks to make a mused freak out



PRESIDENT CLEVELAND AND HIS ADVISERS.

pend in recommendations? Some blundering official in the past has had a four-inch connection put in at Ninth and L streets, through which a six-inch main running west on L street is fed from a twelve-inch main running north on Ninth street. The inefficiency of the water service at the Buckstaff fire was due to that four-inch connection, and now, instead of abating the blunder without delay, the water commissioner must, it appears, petition the city council for permission to do it. If he were to go to work and do it, he would be acting more like a public official with some idea of his official responsibility.

Mayor Weir has sprung a little surprise on several city officials by announcing that he will include in his proclamation of the coming city election a full and complete list of the elective city officers. He contends that the law contemplates that they shall all be elected at the same time, and serve two years each. He contends that the present city attorney, city engineer, and water commissioner were elected a year ago to fill vacancies, and not, as generally supposed, for the full term of two years. He also thinks that the police judge should, under the charter, be elected at the same time as the mayor and the others. The mayor has announced his intentions in the matter thus early so that those interested may prepare to take such steps as they may deem advisable in the courts. Meantime if

of himself. He fondly imagines that when he has spent two years in conducting a false pretense this crazy world will go wild to see him. But it won't. Now if he were to ride a cow around the world, or a rhinoceros, or a quaiacutes, or anything but a horse, he might deserve some attention, but anyone can ride a horse.

It does not always pay a young woman to be too loquacious in expressions of contempt for gentlemen friends. One young lady in this city has just extracted herself from a most embarrassing dilemma into which her loquacity had precipitated her. It was Alice Bloch, a young and remarkably pretty Russian girl who has been serving as a domestic. A year or more ago she desired to wed a young favorite, but met with an effective paternal nay, because he did not want her to marry an American. As she was too young to wed without her father's consent, she had to give it up. When John Hingle, a young and comely and industrious countryman, came wooing her some three or four months since he met with parental favor, but Alice, who worked up town, spoke contemptuously of him and vowed often that she was being forced by her parents to marry him. She begged her acquaintances up town to prevent her parents from forcing her to become Mrs. Hingle and so failed to appear at the time set for her wedding, when the guests were all assembled. At last, out of compassion for her, steps were taken to dis-

courage the match. Meantime, however, the parents regained possession of Alice, and kept her strictly within their care, and when an officer called at her home to prevent her being sold, as she had claimed, into slavery for \$100, Alice flatly denied the entire story of her woe and declared that she was marrying John willingly. At noon on Wednesday last they were married in the Lutheran church on West J street, with pomp and parade, and wedding fineries and festivities such as have never before agitated the elite of Lincoln's Russian settlement. But the endeavors of Alice to make it appear that she was not anxious to marry came very near interrupting the proceedings at a critical moment.

It is to be regretted that Buckstaff Bros. have found it necessary to place their insurance claims in the hands of an attorney for collection. The insurance companies have declined to settle upon any basis satisfactory to Buckstaff Bros., and a law suit will probably follow. This is to be regretted chiefly because it will delay the proposed rebuilding of the works. Meantime some twenty-five business men have threatened to cancel their policies in the companies which have declined to settle.

The ambitious man who is now capering joyously around "in the hands of his friends" will soon be writhing in chagrin and pain beneath the feet of his enemies. This "hands of his friends" business is a chestnut that even a conscientious politician and candidate for office is ashamed to use at this late day. It is a relic of the day when the office sought the man. That day is past. No man has seen an office for ten years past that has had time to go hunting, because there are always too many callers. If an office were seen out hunting a man nowadays it would be arrested for trespassing upon the rights of designing mammas and old maids.

One cannot help but wonder how long Tom Cooke would be sick to have the effects manifested in the condition and degree of his rotundity. He has been under the weather for months, but his sturdiness of frame is as invulnerable as the rock. The curvature of Tom Cooke's chest are two of the things that age cannot wither, custom stale, or the upheavals of politics suppress.

Two arrests have been reported within a week past where the parties arrested could have settled for a money consideration and been released. In both cases the parties were accused of obtaining money by fraud or false pretenses, and in both instances the sole aim of the prosecution appeared to be to compel them to pay back their alleged gains thereby. No one ap-

peared to have any thought for the outraged law, and all that was demanded was that the accused pay back the money and compensate the detective for spotting them. Blackmailing did not go out of fashion when Charley Crow died. In fact it has grown more popular, as it now has a semblance of official dignity behind it. If the man arrested is willing to be mulcted and yields up his money, the county attorney can dismiss the case against him. If he doesn't yield, the county attorney can go ahead with the prosecution.

Hon. W. J. Bryan will leave Washington today to return to Nebraska, and he is expected to reach Lincoln about the 15th. The elevator in the Burr block will doubtless soon be getting a vigorous hump upon itself in carrying to and from Mr. Bryan's floor an endless army of place hunters.

Three conventions promise to make the coming week decidedly interesting in a political way, and before the next issue of the COURIER reaches its readers the next mayor of Lincoln will have been named. The republican convention is booked to occur on the 14th, the independent on the 15th and the democratic on the 16th. The latter, however, may be changed to the 14th. There will probably be a citizens' ticket opposed to the republican ticket, and a mighty warm race may be anticipated.

In Merry Old Springtime.

These are the times when the heart turns to gladness, when the robin returns and the flowers that bloom in the spring, all go to make mankind happy, healthy and prosperous after a long and dreary winter's existence. Coming down O street yesterday Col. Kaley—everybody knows Kaley, the Home buggy man—was standing in the doorway of his west store, happy as a clam at high water tide. "Well, what's up, o d man," queried the scribe. "Oh, nothing much," was the retort, "but this weather is great stuff and it's making business open up in great shape. Have you seen my stock lately, you old duffer," continued the popular dealer. "Well, come in and look through and then say a word about it in your measly sheet." Well, we went in, buggy man and scriber, arm in arm, and truly the array of vehicles presents an assortment that is larger and more varied than any line that the writer has ever seen west of Chicago. Two large store rooms "chuck full" and each rig in as pretty and trim condition as if they had been finished today. There are all kinds of vehicles in every style and description, and if there's anything you want in the carriage line and you cannot find it at the Home Buggy Co.'s emporium, then it's not to be had anywhere. Why not take a stroll through that resort, 1524 to 1528 O street?

